Amateur Radio Newsline(tm) Report 1703 - April 1 2010

Amateur Radio Newsline report number 1703 with a release date of Thursday, April 1st, 2010 to follow in 5-4-3-2-1.

The following is a QST. The ARRL and the American Red Cross finally sign a new Memorandum of Understanding. What might this mean to those of you involved in rescue radio? Also, a crossband repeater will be launched into space in November, a bill to have engineers as advisors to the FCC Commissioners moves forward and a message to families with a member who is a ham: There is hope! Find out the details on Amateur Radio Newsline(tm) report number 1703 coming your way right now.

(Billboard Cart Here)

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RESCUE RADIO: ARRL AND RED CROSS SIGN NEW MOU

Its going to be business as usual between the American Red Cross and the American Radio Relay League. This as the two sign a new Memorandum of Understanding to continue their joint public service and humanitarian work. Mark Abramowicz, NT3V, is at our North-East Bureau with the details:

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The signing of this new Memorandum of Understanding by the ARRL's President Kay Craigie, N3KN, completes a process whose intent was to preserve the role of amateur radio in Red Cross operations without ARRL volunteers being subjected to what some felt were intrusive background checks by an independent company.

In a statement accompanying the March 25 signature on the document, Craigie noted: "Because of the importance of emergency communications, we are happy to be able to continue the League's long-standing relationship with the American Red Cross."

But nearly four years ago, when this issue rose to a boil among amateurs who worked with the Red Cross, it was anything but assured that the ARRL would be seeing an easy resolution to this situation.

In 2006, the American Red Cross began requiring all of its volunteers to submit to a criminal background check by an independent organization it had hired called MyBackgroundCheck.com.

Those who went to the company's website also found that MBC was requiring consent for a credit check and mode-of-living investigation.

Essentially, the company wanted to gather a broad range of personal information that would go to "character, general reputation (and) personal characteristics."

MBC clearly stated on its website at the time that the background check would be "all-encompassing."

In an October 2006 advisory, ARRL President Joel Harrison W5ZN, suggested ARRL members become aware of what they were allowing MBC to gather.

And, while the American Red Cross assured ARRL at the time that it was strictly interested only in the criminal background check, its contractor - MBC - still had the right to gather the other information on an applicant's background.

That sparked invasion of privacy concerns and a whole host of other issues and some communications volunteers walked away.

The compromise hammered out in the new Memorandum of Understanding allows ARRL radio volunteers to arrange at their own expense a criminal background check performed by a state or local police agency.

The Red Cross also agrees under the memorandum that ARRL volunteers won't be asked or required to submit to credit checks or any kind of investigative consumer reports or lifestyle investigations.

The memorandum stipulates that ARRL and Red Cross volunteers will cooperate at disaster scenes and allows for ARRL volunteers to perform such roles as amateur radio liaison, communication equipment operator, communication equipment installation and repair technician and even take part in disaster assessment.

And, the Red Cross agreed that during a Red Cross Disaster Relief Operation, Red Cross credentials will be provided to ARRL volunteers as required and consistent with Red Cross policy.

For the Amateur Radio Newsline, I'm Mark Abramowicz, NT3V, in Philadelphia.

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Hopefully, this new Memorandum of Understanding will allay the fears of those hams who objected to the Red Cross using an outside contractor to do background checks on those who want to volunteer. (ARRL)

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RESCUE RADIO: HAMS BECOME THE EARS OF 911 IN LINCOLN NB. AS TELECOM SWITCHING FAILS

I'm Bill Pasternak, WA6ITF, with breaking news:
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K0NEB: "I'm at 48th and Cornhusker right now in Lincoln, Nebraska, and we are on the major intersections in Lincoln in case somebody needs to call 911 for any kind of emergency."

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That's Joe Eisenberg, K0NEB, who is just one of a large number of Lincoln, Nebraska area hams who are stationed all across the city. This, after a major failure of telecommunications provider Windstream's switching system wreaked havoc on phone service in Lincoln and across much of Southeast

Nebraska on Thursday, April 1st. The outage that began at about 7 a.m. Central time disabled 911 from both dial up and cellular service in several communities including the city of Lincoln.

According to the latest news reports, by early afternoon, landline service in Lancaster County had been restored but cellular service into 911 still was not operating. As a result, an unknown number of hams are still at major area intersections. They are primarily using the Lincoln 146.76 MHz repeater to relay emergency messages to authorities. How long they will be out there as 911 back-up is not known as we go to air.

More on this next week. Jim. (ARNewsline(tm))

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HAM RADIO IN SPACE: CROSSBAND REPEATER IN SPACE TO LAUNCH IN NOVEMBER

A true crossband repeater should be on-orbit by years end. This with word that three small research satellites with amateur radio educational payloads are scheduled for launch in late November with one being billed as a true crossband relay device.

The new CubeSats come from Montana State University, the University of Colorado and Kentucky Space as part of NASA's Educational Launch of Nanosatellite mission. And it's the one from Kentucky that's of
 interest
to the ham in the street.

KySat-1 is believed to be the first ever CubeSat to carry a 2 meter-to-70 cm FM transponder. This will make it a true crossband repeater in space and one that should be accessible by most radio amateurs within its flight path.

For those not aware, CubeSats are in a class of small research spacecraft called pico-satellites. They have a volume of about one quart and weigh no more than 2.2 pounds. The University of Florida was selected as an alternate in case one of the three primary spacecraft cannot fly. (ANS)

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RADIO POLITICS: IARU REGION TO MEET IN EL SALVADOR

The 17th session of the International Amateur Radio Union Region 2 General Assembly will take place from October 4th to the 8th in El Salvador. This meeting will be hosted by the Club de Radio Aficionados de El Salvador. Matters to be discussed include the promotion and defense of amateur radio, High Frequency band plans along with other issues of importance to member societies within the region. More information is available on line at http://elsalvador2010.org/en/ (Southgate)

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RESCUE RADIO: FCC GRANTS 97.113 WAIVER TO LA SHERIFF DEPT FOR TWO EXERCISES

The waivers to section 97 dot 113 of the Amateur Service Rules to permit various entities to use employee hams in emergency training exercises

continue to be granted. The latest is to the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department in California that requested a permit for certain amateur radio licensees to transmit communications on behalf of their employer during upcoming government emergency drills.

The venue for this drill are two medical centers operated by Providence Little Company of Mary. The purpose of the exercises is to demonstrate reliable equipment operation and operator proficiency as a means of back-up communications between and among hospital facilities, law enforcement agencies, and emergency operations centers. This, in the event that normal communications channels are unavailable.

An exercise with emphasis on Providence's Torrance, California, facility will take place on April 22nd. Another with emphasis on Providence's San Pedro facility will take place on June 17th. In total the drills involve 17 hams employed at the two facilities. Participants for the Sheriff's Department will be non-employee volunteers, who do not require a waiver.

In granting the request, the FCC says that the waiver to Section 97 dot 113 of the Amateur Service Rules is warranted in the public interest under the circumstances requested. (FCC)

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RESCUE RADIO: FCC GRANTS KC 97.113 WAIVER REQUEST IN KANSAS CITY

The FCC has also issued a Part 97.113 waiver to Wyandotte County KCK Emergency Management of Kansas City, Kansas. This also to permit certain Amateur Radio Service licensees to transmit communications on behalf of their employer during an upcoming government emergency drill.

In his March 23 request, Larry Eker who is the Program Coordinator of Homeland Security for Wyandotte County Emergency Management told the FCC that the County will be participating in a Kansas City Metro Mass Causality Incident Exercise titled Perfect Storm. That it is to take place on April 7th from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. at several locations in Platte County, Missouri, and Wyandotte and Johnson Counties, Kansas.

Scot Stone is the Deputy Chief of the Mobility Division of the FCC's Wireless Telecommunications Bureau. He said that in granting the waiver for the dozen requested government employed hams to take part, that granting of the waiver request is appropriate under the circumstances presented. This because the public interest is served in facilitating the April 7th public safety exercise and by permitting the amateur licensees to take part. (FCC)

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BREAK 1

 From the United States of America, We are the Amateur Radio Newsline, heard on bulletin stations around the world including the WA6TWF Super System serving the world from Los Angeles California.

(5 sec pause here)

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RESCUE RADIO: HIKING HAM BECOMES FIRST RESPONDER

A ham radio operator truly became a first responder on Sunday morning March 28th. It happened when John Oakberg, NK4N, was hiking in the Great Smokey Mountains National Park near Mount LaConte. That's where he came across a 57 year old female hiker who has sprained or broken her left ankle and leaving her unable to walk back down off the hill.

Oakberg and several others in the woman's hiking party first tried cellular phones to summon assistance but there was no service available where they were. But NK4N had with him a hand held transceiver with which he was able to put out a call for assistance over several local repeaters. As Oakberg's signal was noisy into all of the repeaters but two other hams identified as Dean Webb, N4NLT, operating mobile and Cleve Hayes, KB4UAL, at his home who could hear NK4N direct. They assisted in relaying data to Scott Wyrick, KD4CWB. After obtaining the necessary information KD4CWB called the National Park Service dispatcher, relayed the facts and requested a rescue team to be dispatched.

It took a few hours but rescuers were finally able to reach the victim and successfully carry her to safety. Paramedics treated her on the scene but she refused transport via ambulance and left the area in a private vehicle. Reportedly her hiking group took her to the Sevier County Medical Center for additional treatment. (KD4CWB)

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RESCUE RADIO: HAMS TAKE PART IN SIMULATED TSUNAMI DRILL

Amateur radio was part of an simulated tsunami emergency training exercise along the Northern California coastline held on March 24th. Timothy Hanna, WB9JNS, a member of the Mendocino County Amateur Radio Communications Service, was one of over a dozen hams that participated in a portion of the test involving the use of amateur radio.

Through the use of ham radio channels, the Mendocino County Amateur Radio Communications Service was able to have contact with an emergency operations center in Eureka. The message Hanna and his associates sent was a simulated report of conditions in Mendocino County.

Hanna told the Ukiah Daily Journal that in all, hams demonstrated at least four separate methods of getting in contact with Humboldt County. A total of 13 licensed Ham radio operators involved in the training exercise. (Ukiah Daily Journal)

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RADIO LAW: BILL TO ADD ENGINEERS TO COMMISSION MOVES ON

A bill that would allow each FCC commissioner to add an electrical engineer or computer scientist to his or her staff has been approved by the Senate Commerce Committee.

Called the FCC Commissioners' Technical Resource Enhancement Act, the proposed legislation says that the new technical staffers would provide the commissioners with technical consultation when appropriate. They would also interface with the Office of Engineering and Technology, commission bureaus, and other technical staff of the commission for additional technical input and resources.

As previously reported, the bi-partisan bill was co-sponsored by Senators Olympia Snowe and Mark Warner. A similar was introduced in the House by Representative Jerry McNerney earlier and has been referred to the House Commerce Committee. (Adapted from Radio Ink)

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ELECTRONICS DISPOSAL: CEA SETS UP RECYCLING WEBSITE

With the digital television transition now almost a year old and new flat panel sets selling as fast as they can be manufactured, the Consumer Electronics Association has commented on an aspect of the transition that hasn't been too widely discussed. That being what to do with all those old
analog television receivers.

In its well publicized remarks, the Association is urging consumers to take advantage of the many ways to safely dispose of used analog TV sets. It noted that it offers a list of manufacturer and retailer electronics recycling programs as well as a searchable database of electronics recyclers by Zip code on its web site.

The Association also says that many consumers are unaware of other local options for recycling unused consumer electronics products. It emphasizes that its website site lets consumers access ways to find electronics recycling opportunities in their area and other information as well. The Consumer Electronics Association's electronics recycling website is located in cyberspace at www.mygreenelectronics.org. (RW)

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HAM HAPPENINGS: RAIN DROPS TELEPHONE DIAL IN SERVICE

RAIN, the Radio Amateur Information Network produced by Hap Holly, KC9RP, has discontinued its dial-up outgoing programming service effective April 1st and will only be available over the World Wide Web. This, due to a lack of activity on the phone line that has been provided to Hap by Uddle Systems.

As with most ham radio audio providers, RAIN has found that the majority of its listeners prefer the quality of downloadable audio over the Internet to the relatively constricted trait obtainable over a normal telephone. So it is shifting its entire emphasis to digital distribution from its website at www.therainreport.com. There you can find the latest programming provided by KC9RP along with files and podcasts from the last three years.

And less we forget, Hap had his back surgery and his recovery is progressing well. Once out of the hospital he will be in rehab for several

weeks. During this period, RAIN listeners will be treated to highlights of shows from the past. Get well wishes can be sent by e-mail to hap at the rainreport dot com or by regular mail to his callbook address. (RAIN)

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THE SOCIAL SCENE: CROATION TELEGRAPHY CLUB OFFERS FREE MEMBERSHIP

If you like CW, the Croatian Telegraphy Club invites you to become a member. Joining by E-mail is free and every member is also inducted into the European CW Association as well. More is on-line at www.hamradio.he/ctc.   (Croatian Telegraphy Club)

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THE SOCIAL SCENE: SOUTHEASTERN VHF SOCIETY CONFERENCE APRIL 23 - 24

Registration is still open and available for this years Southeastern VHF Society Conference to be held at Morehead State University in Morehead, Kentucky from April 23rd to the 24th. You can download more information about the conference and a registration form at www.svhfs.org/conference.html (WA4KXY via VHF Reflector)

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HAMVENTION 2010: K4SV TO SPEAK AT SWODXA DAYTON DX DINNER

The SouthWest Ohio DX Association has announced that their speaker for their 25th annual DX Dinner on May 14th, will be Dave Anderson, K4SV. The DX Dinner is held annually in conjunction with the Dayton Hamvention, this year at the Crowne Plaza Hotel, Dayton, Ohio. Door prizes include an Icom IC7600 transceiver and an Alpha 8410 amplifier. More is on-line at www.swodxa.org (SWODXA)

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HAMVENTION 2010: PANEL ALMOST COMPLETE FOR 2010 HAM RADIO TOWN MEETING

The panel is now almost complete for this years Amateur Radio Town Meeting to be held on Saturday, May 15th at the 2010 Dayton Hamvention. This years Town Meeting is titled "Amateur Radio As A Way To Find Or Keep A Job In Today's Shrinking Job Market", and in reality it will be a job advisory fair of sorts. One where people who have built their careers in part or in total because of being radio amateurs will share their experiences with you.

This year brings some new names to the long running Town Meeting panel. Among them is Diana Eng, KA2UHB. Diana is a New York City based fashion designer who integrates electronics into many of her of her designs. A former Project Runway contestant, KA2UHB also produces and hosts on-line videos explaining the various aspects of electronics, communications and ham radio.

 From the ARRL comes Allen Pitts, W1AGP who is the League's Media Realizations specialist. Simply said, his job background will amaze and astound you. Allen has truly been there and done that. Now he will share his knowledge with all of you.

And we will also have a presenter who can answer the question of what to do when you are nearing retirement and the company you have spent most of your lifetime working for suddenly folds. So there you are without a job or a pension to fall back on. That's what happened to Bob Sherman, K2SJP, but thanks to being a ham radio operator since his teen years a new career in the same industry was not that far away.

They, along with returning speakers that include Heil Sound's Bob Heil, K9EID, ABC television's Steve Mendelsohn, W2ML, and Rich Moseson, W2VU of CQ Magazine will make up the panel of experts.

As usual we will be in Meting Room 2 from 11:45 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Hara Arena on Saturday, May 15th. If you are at Hamvention 2010, please join us. We will not have all the answers, but hopefully we will at least be able to give you some general guidance in gaining employment or keeping a job you now have. (ARNewsline(tm))

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BREAK 2

This is ham radio news for today's radio amateur. From the United States of America, We are the Amateur Radio Newsline with links to the world from our only official website at www.arnewsline.org and being relayed by the volunteer services of the following radio amateur:

(5 sec pause here)

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EMERGING TECHNOLOGY: WORLDS SMALLEST SUPERCONDUCTOR REVEALED

Science Daily reports that researchers have discovered the world's smallest superconductor. This, in a sheet of four pairs of molecules less than one nanometer wide. On March 29th, the Ohio University led study, published as an advance online of its findings in the journal Nature Nanotechnology. It provides the first evidence that nanoscale molecular superconducting wires can be fabricated. These it says could be used for nanoscale electronic devices and energy applications. The study also is noteworthy for providing evidence that superconducting organic salts can grow on a substrate material. You can find out more at www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2010/03/100329112151.htm (Science Daily)

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WORLDBEAT: RADIO SWEDEN TO END MW AND SW BROADCASTS

Radio Sweden will end its medium and short wave broadcasts on October 31st. This, in favor of web services that the broadcaster believes to be the best use of resources and in line with international trends.

According to a news release the English-language service is to continue on the web and on national over the air broadcasts. The Russian transmissions will be available only on the web, as is the German service is now. (Worldwire)

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WORLDBEAT: NEW VIDEO OF THE RADIO DOCUMENTATION CENTER IN VIENNA

A visit to radios golden past is now available on-line. Amateur Radio Newsline's Fred Vobbe, W8HDU, has the story of the journey:

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Jonathan Marks, G8WGN, the former host of Radio Netherlands Media Network has made available a video of his visit to the Radio Documentation Center in Vienna, Austria. That's the home to millions of QSL cards, magazines and other radio related documents.

Marks says that he was there in September of 2009 that his colleague and friend Wolf Harranth, OE1WHC. Harranth showed Marks around the world's largest collection of radio related documents that contains artifacts from both from the broadcast and amateur radio world. OE1WHC also shared a bit of his own philosophy as to the reason for the archive:

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OE1WHC: "Its always great fun to listen to the radio and to transmit yourself . To listen to amateur radio. Communications is fun; sometimes its sad but its sad fun at that time."

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Marks notes that there are millions of QSL cards, magazines, books and unique government records that tell the story of communication across international borders. He adds that the center survives on help from volunteers and he hope that his video will help to explain why they are so passionate about preserving the golden age of international radio.

For the Amateur Radio Newsline. Im Fred Vobbe, W8HDU.

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The video that was shot in High Definition. Part 1 of this is on line at http://vimeo.com/10320815. Marks says that Part 2 will follow shortly. More information in both English and German at http://dokufunk.org.   (Southgate)

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WORLDBEAT: NEW MORE ISLAND IS NO MORE ISLAND

If you are thinking of sponsoring a DXpedition to New Moore Island in the Sunderbans you might as well forget it. This is because the disputed island in Bay of Bengal has disappeared into sea.

For nearly 30 years Bangladesh and India have argued over ownership of a tiny rock island in the Bay of Bengal. Now Mother Nature has resolved the dispute for them. Due to rising sea levels, as of March 24th the island's gone.

According to news reports, its disappearance below the waves has been confirmed by satellite imagery and sea patrols and one might now say that New Moore Island is, no more. (Published news reports)

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DX

In other D-X, the long hoped for Jan Mayen DXpedition is now set for July 4th to the 16th of 2011 and will be lead by SQ8X. He and his group of operators plan to be on the air for 10 to 12 days with 2 to 3 stations. More details will be forthcoming later this year.

F4EGZ, is active portable FR from Reunion Island. He will be there through April 19th operating 20 through 6 meters. He will accept 6 meter skeds via E-mail at f4egz (at) yahoo (dot) fr. Please QSL via his home callsign.

Six female operators will be on the air as OX6YL from the western edge of Greenland between September 16 and the 20th. Activity will be on the HF bands using CW and SSB. A Web site for this operation is currently under construction at www.qsl.net/la6rha/greenland

According to a report from the South African Radio League, its again been noticed that some operators in IARU Region 1 have been operating outside the allocation of the 160 meter band. The low frequency limit in Region 1 is 1810 kHz. This makes it illegal to work stations in IARU Regions 2 and 3 who are operating below that frequency.

A DXpedition to Mozambique is now slated for October which will include a scouting Jamboree on the Air or JOTA operation from the capital Maputu. The group also plans to operate the CQ World Wide SSB contest from the city of Xai Xai. For more information on the DXpedition check out the web pages at www.3da0ss.net

Lastly, V73NS who is just finishing up his operation from Kwajalein will be deploying to Afghanistan
at the end of April. Neil told the OPDX newsletter that once there, he will have his radio sent to him. He says that he plans to operate QRP CW only. QSLs for his V73NS operation should be sent direct via W3HNK.

(Above from various DX news sources)

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THAT FINAL ITEM: STUDY INDICATES HAMS CAN BE SAVED FROM HAM RADIO

And finally this week, some good news from the world of science for the families of hams. There is hope for recovery! Recovery from what you ask? Newsline roving correspondent Pierre Pullinmyleg is here with the answer in his annual, April 1st report:

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Researchers at zee American Museum of Natural History have found evidence zat evolutionary adaptations of cave-dwelling scorpions in Mexico are

reversible as zee creatures move closer to sunlit areas. Writing in zee April issue of the science journal Cladistics, the museum's Lorenzo Prendini, Associate Curator for Invertebrate Zoology, says zat "three more generalized scorpion species living closer to za surface evolved from specialized ancestors living in caves deep below zee surface."

Zis discovery gives new hope to zee families of hams who spend most of zeir lives in dimly-lit basements and attics, and who have developed adaptations to survive in zeese environments, such as extra stores of body fat for sustenance during lengthy periods of confinement and reduced olfactory function.

Zee only potential problem, according to scientists, is zat zeese changes may not be reversible in a single generation. In za scorpions zat were studied, for example, it is believed xat ze reverse evolution has occurred over a period of some 65 million years.

 From a cave somewhere in eastern Mexico, zis is Pierre Pullinmyleg reporting for Newsline.

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Thanks Pierre. You may have made the relatives of ham radio operators feel truly good. Then again, maybe not. (Source: The Pierre Pullinmyleg Foundation for April 1st Reportage')

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NEWSCAST CLOSE

With thanks to Alan Labs, AMSAT, the ARRL, the CGC Communicator, CQ Magazine, the FCC, the Ohio Penn DX Bulletin, Radio Netherlands, Rain, the RSGB, the Southgate News and Australia's W-I-A News, that's all from the Amateur Radio Newsline(tm). Our e-mail address is newsline@arnewsline.org. More information is available at Amateur Radio Newsline's(tm) only official website located at www.arnewsline.org. You can also write to us or support us at Amateur Radio Newsline(tm), 28197 Robin Avenue, Santa Clarita California, 91350

Before we go, a reminder that the nominating period for the 2010 Amateur Radio Newsline Young Ham of the Year Award is now open. Each year, we here at the Amateur Radio Newsline in association with Vertex Standard Corporation -- the makers of Yaesu brand ham radio gear -- and CQ Magazine combine to honor a ham radio operator age 18 or younger for his or her contributions to ham radio or to society itself through ham radio.

All nominations and materials required by the official rules must be received by Amateur Radio Newsline no later than midnight on May 30th. Both "mail-in" and electronic submissions are being accepted this year. Full rules and a downloadable nominating form are now on our website at www.arnewsline.org. Just scroll down until you see "2010 Young Ham of the Year Awards Now Being Accepted" and click on the word "here" to download the directions and the form. You can also leave questions and comments on the official Young Ham of the Year Award page on Facebook dot com.

For now, with Bill Pasternak, WA6ITF, at the editors desk, I'm Jim Davis, W2JKD, saying 73, we thank you for listening and a truly happy April Fools Day 2010 to all.

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